CAG's Concern over Rail Coaches

3773. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has expressed concern over the falling sick of a large number of rail coaches, within three months of their mandatory periodic overhauling, because of poor workmanship over partial repairs;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to improve the situaiton?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The CAG's report No. 9 of 1999 mentions that a number of coaches are falling sick within 3 months of the periodic overhaul, thereby indicating poor quality attention in the workshops.

The action taken report on this para was submitted by the Ministry of Railways which dispels the doubts raised by the report about coaches falling sick within 3 months after the overhaul. The word 'sick' is used in Railways to describe any coach which needs to be detached for attention at the depot repair facility called ""Sick Line". Sick marking of coaches is a normal part of maintenance and the causes of marking coaches sick are regularly analysed as an aid to the management to detect any adverse trends arising out of poor quality of workmanship, design or material.

A new parameter of ""coaches marked sick within 100 days from the periodic overhaul" was devised in 1996-97 to monitor the relative quality of work at different workshops. Records indicate the numebr of coaches marked sick per 100 coaches overhauled has reduced from 6.4 in 1996-97 to 5.7 in 1998-1999, which has been possible through persistent efforts and close monitoring. The improvement in reliability was also evident from reduction in enroute coach detachments which have reduced from 361 cases in the year 1996-97 to 197 during the year 1998-99, inspite of increased number of trains.

It is further supported by the fact that IR have constantly maintained coach availability above the prescribed 90% level. These improvements are results of improved attention to coaches, particularly at workshops.

(c) Action is taken regularly to improve the areas of weaknesses revealed in the analysis at both manufacturing and repairs facilities. Some of the

important measures which have been taken by the Railways for improvement in workmanship and longevity of coaches are as under:

(i) ISO certification of Coach Production Units and important Periodic Overhauling Workshops.

(ii) Quality audits of Periodic Overhauling Workshops and Maintenance Depots.

(iii) Strict control on the quality of output from Coach Periodic Overhauling Workshops through the system of Netural Examiners.

(iv) Review and improvements of existing coach maintenance infrastructure and provision of new facilities for additional trains.

(v) Design improvements and introduction of better material to improve reliability of coaches like Bogie mounted brakes, Composite brake blocks, high capacity couplings, etc.

(vi) Broadband analysis of reliability parameters to identify weak systems, depots, workshops direct efforts and resources to eliminate the same.

Besides the above improvements in existing coaches and maintenance system, Railways are also in the midst of Coach Technology Upgradation through induction of State-of-Art coaches and transfer of technology of their design and manufacture.

Telecom and Multimedia Venture of Railways

3774. SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry propose to build a nation-wide broadbased Telecom and Multimedia venture;

(b) if so, the details thereof, with initiative to be taken in this regard;

(c) whether some objectives are to be achieved with launch of the above venture;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the passengers would be benefited from this venture; and

(f) if so, the details thereof, with amount involved in the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A policy decision has been taken by the Ministry to build a nation-wide broadband telecom and multi-media